

# Indiana House of Representatives

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## News and Information

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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### **VAN HAAFTEN BILL ON ORDINANCE VIOLATIONS, TEEN CLUB REGULATIONS PASSED BY HOUSE**

INDIANAPOLIS -- Senate Bill 498, a bill pertaining to local government co-sponsored by State Rep. Trent Van Haaften (D-Mount Vernon), passed out of the House today by a vote of 87 - 9.

Van Haaften was successful in amending the bill to include legislation regarding the regulation of teen clubs. This amendment is similar to House Bill 1145, which was authored by State Rep. Dennis Avery (D-Evansville) and did not go to third reading earlier this session.

"Cases have been reported across the state that involve older men sexually assaulting young girls at teen clubs," said Avery. "Teens and their parents should not have to worry about sexual predators inappropriately socializing at the clubs and this legislation will assist local governments in creating a safer environment for teens at these venues."

The amendment allows cities, towns and counties to license teen clubs. Municipalities will also be allowed to set hours of operation and have age restrictions on those who may enter the clubs. Criminal history background checks can also be performed on teen club owners and employees.

"The safety of our children is always a concern," said Van Haaften. "This bill will give communities the opportunity to protect our children. It will let them regulate teen clubs, so they can determine who is allowed to run the clubs, who can be in them and how long the clubs can be open."

The bill initially only addressed ordinance violations. It stated that a person convicted of an ordinance violation may pay up to \$2,500 for a first offense and up to \$7,500 for a subsequent offense. Also, a person convicted of an ordinance violation could request to perform community restitution or service instead of paying a monetary judgment.

"It is surprising that, until now, there has been no law regarding the regulation of teen clubs," said Van Haaften. "I am very pleased that the other members of the House realized that this needed to be rectified."

Senate Bill 498 returns to the Senate for concurrence on changes made in the House.